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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4466th meeting

Thursday, 31 January 2002, 3.45 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Koonjul	(Mauritius)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Tafrov
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Ms. Foo
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

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02-23827 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Wrap-up discussion on the work of the Security Council for the current month

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

As this is a wrap-up meeting, by definition we are supposed to take stock of what we have done during the month, or what we have not done, or what we would have liked to have achieved. This exercise can also be an opportunity to evaluate the way in which the Council has conducted its business during the month. In that connection, I invite members to comment on all the issues that we have dealt with during the month, and also to comment on the manner in which these issues have been dealt with. I also invite the comments of members on how we can improve upon what we have not been able to achieve during the month.

For this meeting we do not have a list of speakers, and I invite those who wish to take the floor to raise their hands.

I would now like to make a very brief statement on how we have seen our own presidency before I open the floor to Council members.

The programme of work of the Security Council for the month of January has been determined mainly by the exigencies imposed by previous decisions of the Security Council. The Council renewed the mandates of four peacekeeping operations, examined 11 reports of the Secretary-General and adopted seven resolutions and two presidential statements. We also issued 12 press statements on various issues discussed during the month.

While the attention of the international community continues to be occupied with the situations in Afghanistan and the Middle East, as well as with the threats posed by terrorism to international peace and security, the programme of work for the month of January attempted to strike a balance in its approach by addressing these issues in an adequate manner and, at the same time, refocusing attention on conflict situations in Africa and elsewhere.

We are pleased that the public meeting on the situation in Africa, with the participation for the first time of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), attracted several ministers from both member and non-member countries of the Council. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all those delegations that participated in the meeting, in particular those ministers from member and non-member countries of the Council who travelled to New York for the occasion.

It is our hope that the presidential statement which we have just adopted will serve as a basis for greater and more effective interaction between the Security Council and the OAU. We also hope that succeeding presidencies will continue this focus on African issues by taking a global and holistic approach, and we are grateful in this regard that the United Kingdom delegation has already announced that it will do so during its presidency in July.

I invite members to comment on the open briefing by the Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, Sir Jeremy Greenstock, which took place on 18 January. Their comments could focus on whether that meeting was useful and on how we can further the work both of the Security Council and of the Counter-Terrorism Committee to attain the goals we set ourselves in resolution 1373 (2001).

During this month we also remained engaged and committed with respect to the situation in Afghanistan. We had our regular briefings; we lifted sanctions against Ariana Afghan Airlines; we were able to unfreeze the assets of the Central Bank of Afghanistan. Yesterday's address by Mr. Hamid Karzai, Chairman of the Afghanistan Interim Authority, stressed once again how important the continued involvement of the Security Council is to the Afghan people in their quest for peace and stability.

At the beginning of the month we had said too that we would try to promote transparency in our work. One of the ways we did that was by setting up a web site on which we provided daily summaries of meetings and consultations of the Security Council. Members of the Council may wish to comment on whether that was useful or whether it could be further improved to make our work more transparent. In the same vein, I am very glad that the public meeting on the situation in Africa was broadcast live through a United Nations webcast. That was indeed a technological breakthrough which

allowed the whole world to follow the business of the Security Council. It is probably too easy to find out whether this was well received, but it would be interesting to find out whether this kind of service could be of use in the future to promote transparency in the work of the Council.

During this month we were also able to pursue discussion of some issues relating to the documentation and procedures of the Security Council. We spent quite a bit of time both at ambassadorial and experts level to review the format and the content of the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. This shows that it is possible, with good will, to have discussions on issues that may appear to be difficult. We are glad that on this issue we are, almost, near agreement and that we will be able to have something ready for next month.

During several past wrap-up meetings, we have laid emphasis on the need for the Council to interact with non-members of the Council in order to share views on issues before the Council. Members of the Council may wish to comment on the format we adopted during the debate on the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, whereby we heard three members of the Council, then three representatives of non-Council States, and had Sir Jeremy Greenstock intervene after every six or so speakers. Our aim was to promote some kind of interactive dialogue. I would like to get the views of members on whether that was successful and on whether it might be encouraged in the future. We were also able during January to have two short but very interesting meetings on the format of future wrap-up meetings; even here we seem to be moving towards some consensus. We hope that we will be able to try the new format — on which, again, there is near-consensus — next month.

During this month we were also able to start regular briefings on the situation in the Middle East, a subject which had remained in the footnote of the Council's programme for far too long. The briefing by Mr. Terje Roed-Larsen, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Process, was, I hope, extremely useful, because we were able to get first-hand information from somebody who has actually been operating in the field.

We are also very grateful that the President of the Economic and Social Council was able to respond to our invitation to participate in the public meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Africa. We hope that this participation heralds a new era of cooperation and coordination in addressing issues of international peace and security, in particular the post-conflict peace-building components of peace-building initiatives. The interaction between these two major organs of the United Nations had long been awaited. Members of the Council may wish to address this matter and to suggest ways in which we can improve the relationship between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

The work of the Council during the month of January proceeded, in our view, without too much pressure: we had only one evening sitting. That was possible thanks mainly to the cooperation and support extended by everyone here to me and my team during the month. I will reserve my vote of thanks until everybody else has spoken.

I now open the floor to those members who wish to speak.

Mr. Strømmen (Norway): Let me, first of all, congratulate you, Sir, on the excellent manner in which you have conducted the presidency of the Security Council during the month of January 2002. You deserve our heartfelt thanks. We have chosen to highlight briefly three points relating to the work of the Council this month.

First, we welcome the focus on African issues, notably reflected in the comprehensive public debate on 29 January and in the decision to dispatch a Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea next month in support of the peace process between those two neighbouring countries. I am pleased to confirm that preparations for the mission are well under way in close cooperation with the parties.

Secondly, we commend you, Sir, for the transparency exercise undertaken during the month.

Finally, I ask your indulgence, Sir, and wish to reiterate the desirability of brevity in our interventions in order to facilitate a businesslike and interactive meeting culture in the Council. We must be able to encourage openness and transparency and at the same time to make meetings in the Chamber and in the consultation room as businesslike and result-oriented as possible.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I take this opportunity, Sir, to convey to you and your

team our appreciation for the very skilful way in which you have guided our work, as well as for your commitment. I shall heed the recommendation that we should speak briefly, perhaps for only three minutes.

My first comment relates to our public meeting on Africa. It was a timely, useful debate with excellent participation from the membership of the Organization. Here, the delegation of Mauritius deserves special commendation.

I have two points to make regarding the future. The first is that we should perhaps narrow the focus of our debate on the African continent to a few specific points that could in turn be set out in a more concrete manner in a presidential statement. Secondly, we are glad there has been an agreement about creating the ad hoc working group to follow up on the African situation and the topics of the presidential statement, as well as on working in coordination with the Economic and Social Council. During the year that organ will examine the creation of a special advisory group to meet the needs of countries emerging from conflict, and we enthusiastically welcome the intention of the British delegation to take up this matter again during its presidency in July.

I would also like to say something about the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee and about resolution 1390 (2002), which spells out the mandate of the Committee established under resolution 1267 (1999). It clearly emerged during the open meeting this month that the Counter-Terrorism Committee has been advancing in a quiet and perhaps somewhat invisible, but intensive manner. It is having a considerable effect on the maintenance of international peace and security. The members of the Council are dedicating considerable time and effort, and certainly have done so throughout the month of January, to accomplish a task that should be duly appreciated by the international community. The adoption of resolution 1390 (2002) opened up a new modality for the Council, because, in practice, it established the only sanctions regime that is not linked to a specific territory or country, but rather has global application. That is why its implementation will require new mechanisms, and we will have to discuss substantive topics never before tackled in the Council. I would offer as an example the discussion of the procedure to elaborate in a flexible manner the lists of individuals, entities or organizations involved in international terrorism without diminishing the flexibility of action that is required.

I would like to conclude by highlighting the importance of this wrap-up exercise. We should not measure its impact only by the size of the audience, which is again small. With this only criterion, we would have to reach the absurd conclusion that other public meetings regularly held on other topics on the Council's agenda should be eliminated, because they do not draw a massive number of representatives of non-members of the Council. This exercise leaves a record of our individual vision of the work of the month, and this in itself is very important. We hope that in the future we will agree on procedures and content that will be enthusiastically welcomed by all members of the Council and by a greater number of non-members as well.

The President: I thank the representative of Colombia for his kind words.

I would like to inform members that this is the last Council meeting that Ambassador Shen of China is attending with us. I would like to offer him, on behalf of all the members of the Council and on my own behalf, our very best wishes for continued success. He has been the Deputy Permanent Representative of China, and he will be departing from New York very shortly. I know that I am speaking on behalf of all members when I express the hope to be able to see him again in New York in either an official or unofficial capacity. We all look forward to that opportunity.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for the good wishes that you have expressed to me just now.

With regard to this month's work, the month has been a very fruitful one. The President made a very comprehensive plan for the month's work. While promoting transparency, he also tried his best to guarantee the efficiency of our work.

The Security Council successfully carried out its work for this month, thanks to the efficient efforts of the President and the work of the Mauritius delegation. In particular, the programme of work of the last week fully demonstrates the capacity of the President for coordination and leadership.

The Security Council held a public meeting on the situation in Africa, which demonstrates the importance the Security Council attaches to the problem of Africa, and which also strengthens the communication between regional organizations such as

the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations. We hope that the broad consensus reached on how to resolve the issues of peace and development in Africa can be quickly translated into concrete actions. The issue of Africa should be a priority matter on the agenda of the Security Council. In the future, we hope that we can further strengthen the communication between the OAU, other regional organizations and the United Nations.

The President also arranged a timely open meeting to hear the report of the Counter-Terrorism Committee on its work and future work plan. At the same time, it was an opportunity to get a sense from the broader membership of what it expects from the Committee. This is no doubt very beneficial for the next stage of work of the Committee.

The question of Afghanistan was also a focus of the this month's work. The Chairman of the Afghan Interim Authority, Mr. Karzai, spent only a short time in the Security Council, but his presence was very significant. We fully support the statement made by the President on behalf of the full membership, and we hope that the next President will continue to be seized of the situation in Afghanistan.

Of course, there is still the regrettably unresolved issue of the conflict between Palestine and Israel. Yesterday's discussion of it was far from sufficient. We hope that the Security Council will expand its involvement in and give greater attention to this issue so that it can play a greater role. It would be a pity if the Security Council could not play a greater role on that question, which affects the security of the region and the world.

This is the last time that I will be taking the floor here as the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Chinese delegation to the United Nations. I have worked here for the past four years, during which time my collaboration with colleagues here in the Council has left me with good memories. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks to all my colleagues for having extended to me and to my delegation their support and cooperation.

Finally, again I would like to thank you, Sir, for the good wishes expressed to me just now.

The President: I thank the representative of China for his very kind words and for the words of wisdom that he had for the members of the Council before he leaves. We wish him all the very best.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank you, Sir, for the excellent way that you have presided over the Council in the month of January. I would also like to bid farewell, but not adieu, to our colleague, Ambassador Shen. Goodbye. We are certain we shall see you again.

Ambassador Levitte would have liked to be able to come here today, because, like many members of the Council, he would have wished our monthly wrap-up to be more interactive to be attended by more representatives. Fortunately, we have here the Permanent Representative of Namibia, a former member of the Council, who certainly would have had some interesting comments to make. The Ambassador of Jamaica, who just left the Chamber, would have liked to stay, and I believe would have done so, if she could have taken the floor. But I understand that under the presidency of Mexico we will be able to have a true interactive debate, limited to certain points. And each statement should be limited — as our colleague from Norway recalled — to three minutes. So I shall try to do so with my watch. Three minutes means three points.

My first point is on the fight against terrorism. Ambassador Greenstock has in fact given us a good format for interaction with the non-members of the Council. I think it is a good example. We should repeat this type of interactive meeting with non-members of the Council, for example, next month, on the question of Afghanistan. I know that many non-members of the Council wish to be able to have an exchange of views with Mr. Brahimi, and we will shortly have the opportunity to have him here in New York.

My second point is on Africa. We had an excellent debate on Africa. It was summed up very well at the end by Mr. Ibrahima Fall. With respect to Africa, we have taken note that we will have an opportunity to come back to the issue of targeted and limited sanctions. Also during the debate on Africa, France announced it would soon put forward a proposal for creating a permanent mechanism on sanctions. From the debate on Africa, we should also retain everyone's wish for good cooperation on the peace processes between all the donors and the Security Council. We will soon hold, during the United Kingdom's presidency, a meeting with the Economic and Social

Council on the peace-building process. When we discuss East Timor, perhaps in April, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund will participate in order to have good interaction among all the Council's partners in peace-building.

My third point is on the Middle East. We kept our commitment to have a meeting on the Middle East in January. It was held yesterday with Mr. Roed-Larsen. We have a press statement available on the web site of the presidency of the Security Council. We must continue, and the question of the Middle East must be dealt with by the Council on a very regular basis. I hope that I did not exceed my three minutes.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (*spoke in French*): I would also like to join those who have expressed to Ambassador Shen best wishes for success in his next mission, wherever that takes him, and we hope to see him again soon in New York.

Today's debate has confirmed the auspicious trend towards brevity, which leads me to confine myself to a few essential points.

The most important thing is to thank you, Sir, for your brilliant presidency. It was a tremendous success. You have managed to be efficient while making newly elected members like us feel at ease in the Council. My delegation and I sincerely thank you for that.

The Council's work in the month of January was largely focused on crisis situations in Africa, which is to be welcomed. The public debate on the situation in Africa was a success. The presence of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Amara Essy, among us was an important feature. The presence of ministers of both members and non-members of the Council was a success. Bulgaria's Minister for Foreign Affairs greatly regretted not being able to attend because of an important bilateral commitment. The Council's meeting enabled us to exchange ideas on strategies for strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

The fight against terrorism rightly occupied a central place in the Council's activities this month, and substantial work was carried out by the Committee, especially on the review of the country reports pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001). In this regard, we would like to underline the transparent and effective approach of the work done by the Committee's Bureau, particularly by the British chairmanship of the Committee. I would once again like to pay tribute to Sir Jeremy Greenstock for his remarkable work. The public debate on terrorism was a clear success, especially due to the chosen format, which was a positive innovation worth using on other occasions.

Bulgaria is gratified that the Council reacted quickly and appropriately to the situation in Afghanistan. The rapid adoption of resolution 1390 (2002) constitutes a success for the Council and the international community.

My country welcomes consensus in the Council on the resolution extending the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia.

In conclusion, I would like to thank you particularly, Mr. President, for including the issue of Kosovo on the Council's agenda this month. We are pleased that the presidency held a public debate. My country feels it is important that the Council continue closely following the situation in Kosovo on a regular basis at a time when the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo is at a critical point in carrying out its mandate. The recent appointment of Mr. Michael Steiner as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, given his skill and experience, gives us hope for the consolidation of peace and stability in Kosovo.

The President: I thank the representative of Bulgaria for his kind words addressed to me and my team.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): I join in the tributes that have been paid to Ambassador Shen. Over the last three and a half years, he has become not only a good colleague but a good friend as well. I, personally, will miss him.

Mr. President, congratulations on a very good month. The output of the Council should not be measured simply by quantity but by quality, too. I think that this month we have not done badly. We, too, were pleased with the open debate on Africa and particularly pleased to have with us at the table the President of the Economic and Social Council.

As Baroness Amos indicated, we will be making Africa a major theme of our presidency in July. We may not follow quite the same format, since, although imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, it does not always work best. But I took good note of what Ambassador Valdivieso had to say about making the focus a little bit more precise. Over the next few months, we will be refining our ideas, and we will hope to have a good package ready to submit by the time our presidency starts.

I would like to make two other points. I do not really think it is for the United Kingdom delegation to comment on the counter-terrorism briefing. I would say that others who have spoken to us found it useful. I think it has been a deliberate effort of our collective strategy to be as inclusive as possible about the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee in respect of the wider membership. I have to say that I personally was very pleased to see the regional emphasis that came out in some of the statements. I think that has a direct bearing on the remarks that Ambassador Strømmen was making about the need to try to think about how we can keep our statements short and our public meetings effective. I think that is one useful lesson that one can perhaps draw, even if it is not directly applicable to all other circumstances.

Finally, I would not like the review of the month to go by without mentioning the work of the Working Group on peacekeeping, on which we came to a major decision this month. There is still a lot to do in terms of other issues on the Working Group's agenda, though I hope we will now be able to make the new arrangements in respect of troop-contributors' work. I wish Ambassador Strømmen the best of luck in his new incarnation as Chairman of the Working Group. We will be cooperating with him fully.

The President: I thank Ambassador Eldon for his kind words addressed to the Chair.

Mr. Fall (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to associate itself with the good wishes that the Council has expressed for Ambassador Shen, who is leaving us, and to say how much we have appreciated his wisdom and his contribution in the work of the Council.

I would like to say, Mr. President, how much my delegation has appreciated the work done by your delegation this month. My delegation has just completed its first month as a member of the Council and, thanks to your openness, we have been able to assess the course that we will be taking together.

My delegation particularly appreciated the fact that, under your presidency, Sir, we discussed many issues relating to Africa — indeed, almost all of the African questions — on the Council's agenda. Above all, you deserve the credit for your inspired decision to organize a public debate on the situation in Africa. That meeting, which was a great success, demonstrated the great interest that Member States have in Africa. The meeting enabled us to consolidate our respective approaches to Africa, provide diagnoses and identify current problems, as well as to share our hopes. We hope that the important elements contained in the presidential statement that resulted from that historic meeting will be duly considered and taken into account by the Secretariat, as well as by the Council itself, so that we can bolster our partnership with African institutions: the Organization of African Unity — in particular its Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution — and subregional organizations.

We all agree that peace and security must be restored and consolidated in Africa so that that continent can take up the challenge of development. You deserve a great deal of credit, Sir, and my delegation would like to very warmly congratulate you.

Secondly, my delegation welcomes the format of the debate that you organized on counter-terrorism. The interactive dialogue that was employed on that occasion in the discussion among members and non-members of the Council, as well as the Chairman of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, was very useful. It enabled all Member States to take the pulse of and assess the remarkable work done by the Committee, and I would like to congratulate you for that, Mr. President.

Another issue is the question of the Middle East. The Council has just taken the innovative step of organizing a briefing on the question of the Middle East. That wise decision was implemented during your presidency, Sir, and we had a very useful exchange on recent developments in the situation in the Middle East.

On the questions of procedure and documentation, the Council was not able — as Ambassador Mahbubani would have liked — to complete its work. Some progress was made. Let us

hope that the Council will soon be able to reach agreement on that point.

In conclusion, I would like to say once again how much my delegation has appreciated the work that you accomplished, Sir, as President during the month of January and tell you how greatly we have benefited from it.

The President: I thank the representative of Guinea for his kind words addressed to me and to my delegation.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): I would like first to join my colleagues in expressing our appreciation to Ambassador Shen Guofang for his work on the Council and to wish him well in his new assignment. We look forward to seeing him again.

Secondly, on behalf of my delegation, I would like very warmly to thank Mauritius for what we thought was an outstanding presidency this month with regard to the substance of the issues we addressed, the clarity of focus that the presidency brought and the way in which we addressed important issues, such as the meetings on counter-terrorism and on Africa. For all of those reasons, we thought that this was a presidency of real achievement. We also appreciated the courtesy and openness of the presidency and everyone on the Mauritian team to other members of the Council, as well as the wider membership.

With regard to the wrap-up, my delegation has always taken the view that these discussions are very useful exercises. They are important on their own merits because they provide a chance once a month to stand back and look at the wider picture. They are important because of the engagement of the Council with the wider United Nations membership. There is one caveat; as you, Mr. President, pointed out, each month the presidency, of course, sets the background to many issues through the manner in which it approaches the agenda, and so it is important in looking at the wrap-up exercise also to bear in mind how we approach the issue of continuity — the complexity of issues. For that reason, my delegation would support — and we have been discussing this in the Council in recent weeks — a more interactive approach to the wrap-up debate, with involvement of the wider United Nations membership and a strong thematic focus in terms of the issues that we address. But the wrap-up opportunity is important, and we think it should be built on.

In terms of the past month, I would like to make two or three broad points. Ireland welcomed the policy of openness which the presidency brought this month to our work. We had very useful public meetings on Kosovo, terrorism, East Timor and, of course, Africa. Openness and transparency serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, transparency is important for its own sake and for a level of engagement with the wider United Nations membership. But, from the point of view of the Council, there is also the important point that it is a listening opportunity, and many of the points made are in turn integrated into our own work. A balance must always be struck — as Ambassador Strømmen said — between what Walter Bagehot would have called the efficient and the dignified elements of how structures work. The efficient element is, of course, the need for workability, coherence and coordination, while at the same time showing openness to the views of the wider membership, as well as the United Nations family of institutions, in terms of the insights that they bring to the different issues and to the agenda of the Council.

On the substantive issues before us this month, my delegation regarded two in particular as being of great importance. We found the open debate on the situation in Africa to be enormously valuable, partly because of the strong level of representation by ministers from Africa and elsewhere, partly because of the quality of the contributions to the debate and partly because this is a moment of transition in Africa and one of real hope, as a result of the transition of the Organization of African Unity to the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Other contributing factors were the Council's own work in the area of addressing issues of conflict and conflict resolution and the OAU's increasing engagement in Africa in these areas.

All of this meant that the debate was marked by a real sense of new beginnings. One important issue that did come out — Minister O'Donnell from Ireland also emphasized this point — was the interlinkage between conflict prevention and development cooperation issues. Development funds, the issue of debt, the issue of trade opening for African countries — it is not possible, in our view, to address one set of issues without the other. This was a point that came very strongly across in the contributions made in the debate and, indeed, it is reflected strongly in the presidential

statement that we just adopted and which we very much welcome.

Two other issues that did come up in the debate were the importance of coherence in terms of the United Nations role in the wider international community and how issues are addressed in relation to conflict prevention and development. My delegation has consistently argued that there is a need for a closer working relationship with, in particular, the Economic and Social Council. We therefore welcome the reference in the presidential statement to the consideration that will be given to setting up an ad hoc working group. We think this is important because the Economic and Social Council, in its own Charter domain, has a strong role in areas of development and coordination. The Council, as it addresses issues of conflict, peace and security, needs to have an interlocutor with which we can mutually consider the differing roles in these areas. So we think that was important.

The other issue that we found very helpful this month in terms of the agenda was, of course, the debate on counter-terrorism. It was an important debate partly because of the importance of having a genuinely interactive dialogue between the Council and the wider United Nations membership on where we are now in terms of the Counter-Terrorism Committee. The way the presidency structured the debate by alternating members of the Council with others we found to be especially useful.

On this, I would also — as other speakers have done — wish to pay tribute to Ambassador Greenstock for the way he has approached the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee through the briefings of Member States and others. This has created a very broad understanding, which was reflected in the debate on the way ahead in terms of the operation of the Committee.

Finally, other issues of importance during the month were, of course, the emphasis on African issues generally in terms of particular situations, such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Guinea-Bissau and so on. We also welcomed the opportunity to have the open debate on East Timor and the briefings on Afghanistan. We especially welcomed yesterday's consultations on the Middle East and look forward to seeing that continued. We also welcomed the number of meetings with the troop contributors, which you, Sir, mentioned in your opening remarks, and the agreement on the new mechanism for consultation to be chaired by Ambassador Strømmen, which we regard as important.

In conclusion, both in terms of the presidency's programme of work and how it was handled and of the openness to differing views and to the wider membership, we thought this was a month of very real achievement and very much appreciated it.

The President: I thank the representative of Ireland for his very kind words addressed to me and to the Mauritian team.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to join in the expressions of thanks and appreciation made by previous speakers. I pay special tribute to the Foreign Minister of Mauritius for his generous contribution not only to the meeting devoted to the situation in Africa, but also during the discussion and adoption of some important decisions in the Security Council. We believe that his presence imparted greater importance and emphasis to those debates and decisions.

We also wish to thank your entire team, Sir, for the way in which it assumed the responsibilities of leading the work of the Council and of consulting other members. It is difficult to underline all the important missions you have undertaken since assuming the presidency of the Council. They have indeed been numerous and great. I shall try my best, while seeking to avoid repeating what other speakers have said, to stress the most important among them so as to point to those issues that are of the greatest interest.

Obviously, this is Syria's first month as a Council member and we feel that this meeting is the right opportunity to assess it. We believe that it was a rich and productive month, thanks to careful planning by the presidency and to the fact that all points of view represented on this Council were taken into account. I must say that we are satisfied by the work undertaken by the Security Council, particularly vis-à-vis the situation in Africa and the importance accorded to that issue. This emphasis has restored the question of the situation in Africa to the international arena. The Security Council has also monitored the situation in areas of tension in Africa through close follow-up and correct decisions taken vis-à-vis the situations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring countries, in addition to

completing the preparations for the Security Council mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea.

We express our satisfaction that, for the first time, the Security Council, under your presidency, Sir, has convened regular formal briefings on the Middle East. For years, we looked forward to such an opportunity to discuss the situation in that explosive region, which represents a true threat to international peace and security. The Security Council has a special responsibility vis-à-vis developments in the region. We believe that the briefing by Mr. Roed-Larsen, the Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General, was very informative and encouraging and gave the Security Council additional information that accurately reflects the situation on the ground. Mr. Roed-Larsen, after all, works in the region and is most knowledgeable about developments there.

We feel that such briefings, as well as the important subsequent discussions, are a first step on the road towards correcting the Security Council's work in this regard. In many countries, the Council is often accused of employing double standards in debating and considering issues pertaining to the Middle East and in assuming its responsibilities towards that region.

My delegation believes that the open debate of the Security Council on the activities of the Counter-Terrorism Committee was successful. It offered an opportunity to all Members to express their opinions and positions on terrorism and the appropriate means for eradicating it through the promotion of joint international action. The open debate was also a valuable opportunity for many delegations to express their views on such sensitive matters as the need to define the terrorism we are combating and to distinguish between it and the legitimate struggle against foreign occupation.

Mr. President, your achievements this month have indeed been considerable, but we had hoped that another area would have been added to these achievements, namely greater transparency in the working methods of the Security Council and in its interaction with non-members, in keeping with the new formula that we have discussed on a number of occasions in Council meetings. We are confident that the first steps taken in the context of this formula by your successor, the Permanent Representative of Mexico, will provide further opportunities for States to express their views and opinions on the proceedings in the Security Council. The members of the Council thus can become more aware of shortcomings in the Council's work and of areas that might require further attention.

We had also hoped to conclude the discussions that we began on the report of the Security Council to the General Assembly, taking into consideration Singapore's proposals in this regard, which, we believe, take into account all of our aspirations in its current form.

Of course, we support close cooperation between the Council and the Economic and Social Council. The participation by the President of the Economic and Social Council in the debate on the situation in Africa was most welcome. We should like to draw the Council's attention to the fact that last year Syria participated very actively in efforts to enhance substantive relations between the two bodies in a manner that would respect their spheres of activity and their competences within the United Nations. We believe that continuing debate and dialogue on this issue will allow us to achieve the desired result.

Mr. President, I wish to extend to you our gratitude and appreciation. In addition, before closing, allow me to highlight the Security Council's activities vis-à-vis Afghanistan and East Timor, as we believe that those efforts, which we deeply appreciated, were most valuable. The future of Afghanistan and East Timor is very important not only to Asia but also to the world, and we hope that the effective steps taken by the Security Council will promote peace, progress and development and enable the people of East Timor in particular to achieve independence and begin to build their future. We thank you once again for all your efforts.

The President: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for the very kind words addressed to me and to the Mauritian team.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Sir, allow me to congratulate you on the manner in which you guided the work of the Security Council during the month of January. Allow me also to recall that Mexico joined the Security Council on 1 January, following a 20-year-long absence. Indeed, the work carried out during this month has confirmed the appropriateness of Mexico's decision to seek membership in the Security Council, with a view to

participating in the creative and intensive work of this body and thus contributing to the development of the United Nations and to the quest to achieve international peace and security.

Mr. President, we are gratified that the first 30 days of Mexico's participation in the work of the Security Council took place under the presidency of Mauritius, and in particular under your guidance and leadership, because we have found that Mexico's major concerns and the vision it wishes to contribute to the work of the Council were reflected in the manner in which you have guided the work of the Council during the past month.

First, we agree with you, Sir, that the work of the Council must progress in the direction of much greater transparency. In the past 30 days we have seen examples of how this greater transparency has benefited, and will continue to benefit, the work of the Council. The will of the United Nations and of the Council to achieve this greater transparency has been reflected in the fact that recent meetings on Africa, held on your initiative and which successfully took place in this very Chamber, were disseminated throughout the world over the Internet, thus rendering them accessible not only in Africa, where, I am sure, there was great interest in the debate, but also in Latin America and in Mexico itself.

This is useful because it means that, in our countries, on the basis of the Security Council's debates, people will become aware of the commitments that are being undertaken in the United Nations and of the efforts that are being made to resolve the problems encountered in the process of achieving peace, in the context of a broad vision and in a responsible manner, focusing on the tasks that will enable us to establish lasting peace.

There are many aspects of your presidency and of the work achieved by the Council in the past month that deserve to be perpetuated. With respect to the debate on Africa, we believe that, through the presidential statement we have adopted and through the debates held in this Chamber, paths have been opened and guidelines elaborated that should be followed. We have committed ourselves to maintaining the Council's focus on a further exploration of the various opinions and points of view that have emerged in the context of the consultation mechanism established by opening the debate to the rest of the membership of the United Nations, and through involvement with regional organizations and with other agencies of the United Nations system that are active in Africa.

The prospect of the establishment of a working group on the basis of the discussions held in this Chamber represents a commitment that we intend to uphold and further deepen. What has been achieved this month in terms of making Africa the focus of this body should serve as a basis for further work in that direction.

We believe also that it is very meaningful and symbolic that under your presidency, Sir, we were able to successfully complete the process of the participation of the United Nations — not only of the Council — in ensuring East Timor's transition to independence. It is more than symbolic; it is the culmination of lengthy and tireless efforts, fraught with many difficulties, which have finally led to the adoption of a resolution that will continue the work of the Council and of the Organization in East Timor until the day of independence, at which time we will reassess the respective roles of the United Nations and of the international community in supporting development efforts and consolidating an independent East Timor.

We believe that the consultation mechanisms and practices that you have used and that the Council has integrated into its work during this period are a guarantee that its deliberations and decisions will increasingly enjoy the consensus of the community of States that are the United Nations, as well as the support of international public opinion.

In this respect, we found it particularly noteworthy that work was undertaken in the area of combating terrorism. After resolution 1373 (2001) was adopted as a result of the events in New York and Washington, the international community found a work dynamic, of which the Security Council was a prime example, for discussing the immediate commitments of countries in the fight against terrorism, and to do so in a spirit that ensured that the decisions taken would be supported by international law and would be taken by States in the multilateral forums provided by the Charter of the United Nations. The profundity, the seriousness and the professionalism shown in the work undertaken in compliance with resolution 1373 (2001) to combat terrorism are also an obligation for the Council's activities in the days to come.

I would like to conclude, Sir, by thanking your country and you personally for the work you have carried out at the head of the Council. Mexico's presence means that we will continue to work together, as colleagues, toward the same objectives of the quest for peace that the Council has set for itself. You have left us some tasks that we must complete, and two of these are very important.

The first task concerns the reorganization of the work relating to the report of the Council to the General Assembly on its activities. We think the groundwork has been laid for a discussion in the near future that should soon enable us to reach a consensus in the Council and provide to the Assembly in August a report that reflects the concerns of members with regard to the future work of the Council.

The second task, part of the same process, is the analysis of the activities every month, about which a consensus is gradually emerging — and today's fruitful work is in this direction — to make this a participative exercise, in which the opinions of Member States are presented, that will enrich and nurture the work of the Council with the points of view and contributions of all the Members of the United Nations, in particular those of us who are members of the Council.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to thank you once again and congratulate you on the work you have accomplished this month.

The President: I thank Ambassador Aguilar Zinser for his kind words addressed to me, my country and my team.

Ms. Foo (Singapore): First of all, we hope that the Chinese delegation will convey our delegation's tribute and best wishes to Ambassador Shen.

Let me also congratulate Mauritius for its very successful presidency of the Security Council this month. Successful presidencies are not accidental; they are the result of painstaking preparations and unceasing efforts behind the scenes. An example of Mauritius's prompt preparations was the circulation of its provisional programme of work, together with a set of explanatory notes and a list of the objectives of its presidency, on 21 December last year. This allowed Council members, especially the incoming members, to gear up for the month and for the new year.

Looking ahead and projecting into the future is important. At the same time, it is equally important to look back and examine whether we have actually achieved the objectives we set out. Such wrap-up sessions are intended as an opportunity for us to take a step back to look at our successes and failures and to examine longer-term trends that could guide our intermediate steps, as well as an opportunity to find concrete ways of enhancing the effectiveness of the Council.

In an attempt to improve the transparency of the Council's deliberations, Council members decided that such an analytical and critical examination of its own work in a public meeting could help non-members better appreciate the thinking and considerations that went into the outcome produced by the Council. Unfortunately, the last couple of public wrap-up sessions have not attracted much interest in the rest of the United Nations community. This session is not much better.

One consolation is that some non-Council members indicated that they had watched the proceedings on television instead of coming to the Council Chamber, since their physical presence was not needed. This, in fact, is effective transparency, combining technology with the will of the Council to conduct as much of its work in public as possible. Somewhat similar are the daily summaries of consultations provided by the presidency on its own web site, a practice that we support and hope will be continued by future presidencies.

Another consolation, perhaps, is that the public meetings have verbatim records. This allows all who are interested to have full access to the discussion. In fact, we would recommend all United Nations members to read the verbatim records of the last wrap-up session, held on 21 December, during which Council members made use of the opportunity to review and wrap up their work, not just for the month but for the entire year. The five outgoing members also took the opportunity to give their valedictory statements on their two-year Council term. On our part, we sought to provide a year-end report card on the key issues handled by the Council. We categorized five successful, five unsuccessful and five moderately successful files.

Turning to this month's programme, we find that there are clearly a number of successes. One clear success of Mauritius's presidency is its strong focus on Africa, devoting time to almost all the African issues

on the Council's agenda, putting into practice the Council's oft-repeated call for preventive action in the well-timed issuance of a press statement on the situation in Madagascar, and the highly successful and well-attended open meeting on the situation in Africa on 29 and 30 January, which was, of course, also webcast live on the United Nations web site.

Africa is a continent that needs and deserves the Council's attention and resources, even as we take on the challenge of combating international terrorism. We are therefore thankful for the useful discussions we had on several African issues and the outcomes we adopted, including the presidential statement earlier today.

The open debate on East Timor was successful in reinforcing the need for a continued significant United Nations presence in post-independence East Timor. There was wide support for the Secretary-General's recommendations for the successful peacekeeping operation the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), even as the Council and the wider United Nations membership look forward to further specific proposals from the Secretary-General on the follow-on United Nations mission. It was recognized that the Organization must stay the course to make East Timor a success story.

We are particularly grateful to Mauritius for chairing several meetings, both informal and formal, of the Working Group on Documentation and Procedures. We are pleased to announce that Council members are very close to agreement on a note by the President laying down a new format for the annual report of the Security Council to the General Assembly. We hope that, once agreed upon, the new format will be seen to be responsive to the views of Member States and that it will significantly improve the relationship between the two organs. As the Secretariat will need quick guidance in order to prepare for this year's report, we are pleased to hear that the Mexican presidency next month will give the matter an extra push, which should allow us to finalize this matter on time.

Another achievement of the Mauritian presidency was the appointment of the Permanent Representative of Cameroon as the new Chairman of the Working Group on sanctions rather than letting the Working Group fall by the wayside. We hope that under that representative's able leadership we will soon be able to reach some conclusions on the outcome of the Working Group.

There were two important achievements on the counter-terrorism front. First, Council members restructured the sanctions targeted against members of the Al Qaeda organization and of the Taliban and against other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with them. Resolution 1390 (2002) takes into account the changed and new circumstances in Afghanistan, while recognizing that the Al Qaeda network and other related terrorist groups continue to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. While resolution 1390 (2002) now has global application, it none the less provides some continuity and retains mechanisms such as the sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1267 (1999), the consolidated list issued by the Committee, and the Monitoring Group established by resolution 1363 (2001).

Secondly, on the counter-terrorism front, the interest and the level of participation in the public meeting on counter-terrorism demonstrated that the international community remains seized of the effective implementation of resolution 1373 (2001). Apart from enabling Ambassador Greenstock to brief United Nations Members on progress in the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, it also allowed Member States to have an interactive exchange with Ambassador Greenstock. The small innovation of toggling between speakers and responses by Ambassador Greenstock could be repeated in future meetings when appropriate.

Another significant achievement was the adoption of the note by the President, document S/2002/56, of 14 January, which agreed to an additional mechanism in the convening of joint meetings of the Security Council Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations and troop-contributing countries on specific peacekeeping operations. Sustained efforts to strengthen the triangular relationship among the Security Council, troop-contributing countries and the Secretariat will go a long way towards ensuring the success and implementation of Council decisions on United Nations peacekeeping operations. For example, an earlier step forward was made with the establishment of private meetings with troop-contributing countries as a new mechanism under resolution 1353 (2001) in June last year.

However, we believe that it is not always necessary to convene private meetings of the Security Council with troop-contributing countries. In fact, in section 5 (d) of the assessment contained in the last report submitted by the Working Group (S/2001/1335), the Group concluded that consultation meetings chaired by the President of the Council should be used as the principal means of consultation with troop-contributing countries, and that public or private meetings should be convened for a full and high-level consideration of issues of critical importance to a specific peacekeeping operation. We would suggest that, in order to implement both the letter and the spirit of resolution 1353 (2001), future presidencies could consider holding consultation meetings rather than private meetings with troop-contributing countries for routine renewal of peacekeeping operations. Instead of generating a genuine and interactive dialogue with troop-contributing countries, the formal atmosphere of a private meeting may in fact sometimes stifle discussion.

It was also unfortunate that there was no discussion whatsoever at the public meeting on Kosovo of two issues that Singapore raised: first, a regular review mechanism and, secondly, an exit strategy for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). We maintain that with the impending transfer of authority from UNMIK to the Kosovo self-government authorities, this is the right time to address those issues.

Council members also devoted some time this month to discussing how wrap-up meetings could be improved. Owing to time constraints, we could not implement the very useful suggestion made by Ambassador Jean-David Levitte to engage in and generate better interaction with interested non-members of the Council. Although the proposal did not find unanimous support within the Council and may still need to be fine-tuned, we are confident that the Mexican presidency will build on the very useful exchanges we had this month. We hope that we will be able to reach agreement on a format early next month so that all of us can start disseminating the message early to the general United Nations membership in order to encourage their participation.

Finally, apart from focusing the wrap-up meetings on one or two topics, we also believe that one important way of concretely demonstrating the importance of wrap-ups is to follow up on some of the issues raised. Although there will be a verbatim record of today's debate, it might be useful for the Mauritian presidency to consider tabulating some of the key outstanding issues and new proposals; the list could be passed on to the Mexican presidency or circulated to all Council members so that we can monitor the necessary follow-up.

The President: I thank the representative of Singapore for the very kind words she addressed to me and to the Mauritian team.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): This is the first time that Cameroon is participating in a wrap-up meeting of this kind. The remarks I shall be making will therefore be of a general nature.

First of all, Sir, my delegation wants to reaffirm our hearty congratulations on the extremely constructive way in which you presided over the work of the Council in January 2002. You proposed a programme of work that was balanced and covered many items; it enabled us to consider the thorniest of the issues facing us in the realm of international peace and security. Some of those issues concerned specific regions, such as Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East; others concerned more general matters, such as terrorism.

We thank you, Mr. President, for having ensured in your programme of work that Africa would remain at the centre of the Council's concerns. The Council considered national and regional conflicts, and even, in the case of Madagascar, anticipated an evolving situation. The Council also considered the overall situation in Africa, and did so in a high-level public debate. Your preparations for that debate were painstaking, Sir, which enabled us to focus our discussion on formulating specific proposals for action. One of those proposals was to establish a Security Council working group with a mandate to monitor the implementation of the Council's recommendations on Africa and to find ways to improve cooperation with the Economic and Social Council. It was also proposed that a focal point should be designated within the Secretariat to enable us to centralize the Secretariat's multisectoral activities on Africa.

The most important thing concerning that debate is to now highlight the different problems that Africa faces. We have made much progress since the first interactive debate of 1999. Now we have to go deeper,

and this is why we appreciate the proposal and the decision to create the working group. We must now delve more deeply by no longer taking the situation in its entirety but by dealing with specific points of particular issues. I think that it is in this direction that the United Kingdom will be orienting itself. In any case, it is towards this end that Cameroon is gearing its preparations for its presidency in October 2002.

The question of Afghanistan was also the subject of a specific follow-up. The Council thus contributed to the restoration of peace and stability in that country, and also showed its support for the new authorities.

The question of terrorism was the subject of a constructive public debate that allowed all Members of the United Nations, whether members of the Council or not, to give an account of their efforts in implementing resolution 1373 (2001). We said at the time that the interactive formula used for that debate was a wise one, and we hoped that it would serve as a model.

On the whole, this first month in the Security Council has left a very positive impression on us. We have benefited from the support and cooperation of our colleagues from other delegations and we have worked in a cordial atmosphere, which you were able to create and maintain, Mr. President.

The situation in the Middle East is of great concern, and we would have hoped to see more attention devoted to it. We are glad to note that this will be the case from now on. Significant and real progress has been made in the sphere of transparency, thanks to the regular briefings of Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock, and thanks to the presidency, which has made all information on our work available to Members through the web site.

Once again we would like to extend all our congratulations, Sir, for the way you have conducted the proceedings this month. Thank you for having given Africa the attention that its particular situation deserves while of course also attaching as much importance to other situations in which peace is threatened.

The President: I thank the representative of Cameroon for the very kind words addressed to me and the Mauritian team.

Mr. Williamson (United States of America): We join in commending you, Sir, and your entire team for your outstanding tenure as our Council President.

We feel the Security Council did a good job in January, taking significant steps in several important areas. We have built a sound basis for the next couple of months. I will not review everything that we did, but want to cite a couple of major items which point to the future. We have set in place further new ideas and procedures for developing a more transparent, interactive relationship with troop contributors. This is important for United Nations peacekeeping and for the Council's continued effort to do its job well. We will keep trying to improve the usefulness of consultations under resolution 1353 (2001), and develop the new mechanism we have put in place. This will unfold over the next couple of months.

We appreciate Ambassador Strømmen's willingness to take on the responsibility of chairing our Working Group on peacekeeping and look forward to his leadership. The Counter-Terrorism Committee Chairman reported to the Council, and its work is very well in hand. This will be a major component of our work in the coming months. This is a real success for the Council and for the international community.

We also heard from Afghan Interim Authority Chairman Karzai in a meeting that was a model of efficiency. Afghanistan will be much on our minds in the next months as we build on the success, which the Chairman described, and address the challenges of which we are all aware. Again, we have a strong basis for further United Nations actions and Council involvement.

Finally, we have just finished a major discussion on Africa and how the Council can better engage with and support our African friends. As a result of that discussion, under the leadership of Mauritius, we have adopted today a significant statement looking to future steps we can take. We have also agreed to consider establishing a working group to help us continue this effort and to enhance coordination with the Economic and Social Council. The United States wants to be sure that it has focus, is substantive and makes a concrete contribution to the Council's work. Last year the Security Council had 83 formal meetings on Africa. We hope in the future that we can all find a way to have fewer speeches and more results.

Again, this is an excellent beginning to the new year, a very heavy agenda. We did many things well. My delegation looks forward to building on and improving the Council's work, to maintaining

transparency and interaction and to making the Council more effective.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to me and my team.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I apologize for just arriving, but I had a counter-terrorism subcommittee meeting, where we were reviewing the first series of reports. I did not want my absence to be taken to mean that I was not satisfied with the work of the Security Council this month.

I very briefly would like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, your delegation and your Minister. You had a very complicated month, and you steered our ship in a dignified way. We adopted all the decisions that we were supposed to adopt, and I sincerely congratulate you on that.

I have just noticed that the Secretariat has also given us a gift, an elegant carafe of water, so this Chamber is becoming better and better. I hope that this will improve our mood next month.

The President: I wish to express my sincere thanks on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf to all present for the very gracious words and expressions of appreciation for the work carried out during the Mauritian presidency of the Security Council.

We view presidencies not in isolation, but as a continuous and succeeding exercise in the pursuit of our goal. We are therefore very much comforted to learn that Mexico will follow up on some of the very important issues that we have discussed this month relating to, for example, increasing transparency and interaction with the non-members of the Security Council.

I want to take this opportunity to thank those from the larger United Nations membership, the non-Council members who are here today. We do apologize that we were not able to let everybody know that this meeting had been postponed from this morning because we were not able to conclude our consultations in time. I do hope that next month the format will be changed and we will be able to have greater interaction with non-Council members and therefore get more participation from them.

I would like to express once again our grateful thanks to all the delegations on the Council for the cooperation extended to us and for facilitating the discharge of our responsibilities this month. We would also like to express our deepest appreciation to the Security Council secretariat, headed by Mr. Joseph Stephanides, for the tremendous support. A particular word of thanks to Mr. Aleksandar Martinovic and Ms. Norma Chan for their support and cooperation.

Before I pass the baton to Mexico as they assume the presidency for the month of February, we offer them our very best wishes and wish them good luck for a very successful presidency.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.